

OCTOBER 12, 2010 LSPA MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 8:40am in the library.

GUEST SPEAKER – MARGEN KELSEY, PARENT-TO-PARENT

Parent-to-parent is a community-based organization that has been in existence for 25 years. Its objective is to develop programs that support childhood development and help children and parents deal with issues. The group fulfills this objective through sponsoring speakers and book groups discussing topics of interest to children.

Margen shared their newly-designed website, www.parenttoparentwinchester.org, that contains information on upcoming speakers, book topics and groups, topic/book archives, and links to other local communities' parent-to-parent sites.

The organization is supported by grants, including several from the LSPA and other Winchester PTO's. The organization is always looking for feedback and ideas, so please visit the website and leave your comments.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The September 14, 2010 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved as is.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lietza Molloy reviewed the year-to-date budget ending September 30, 2010. The Closing Balance was \$37,634.09. From a revenue perspective, the Direct Appeal has achieved 43% of its annual goal, right where it should be based on prior years. In terms of expenses, the Welcome Back Dinner came in exactly to its estimate, and so far, the class teachers and specialists have submitted \$1535 in expenses against the \$6300 budget (which equates to \$200 per teacher.)

The Treasurer's report ending September 30th was approved.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Kate Scanlon shared last year's MCAS results with the LSPA and discussed the school's overall approach to preparing students for the exam. Kate and our teachers tend to compare our scores both within Winchester specifically (to see if we have opportunities to learn and to teach within our district on best practices) and with our students' performance year over year. The staff also review individual students' scores to identify whether a specific student may need some additional support for the upcoming year.

Open response is an area of opportunity to better understand and then prepare for the thoroughness and level of detail that better scores require. If parents have questions about the results and how to interpret them, or would like to see the actual writing compositions done by their children, please send Kate an email or call her.

In summary, Kate stated that Lincoln is doing very well overall, and while we plan to maintain what we do to prepare our students and staff, our focus will remain on *all* the other aspects of our curriculum that are so important for our students' longer term success.

Kate also reported on the continuing improvements for the playground. We are in the process of upgrading the basketball pole to be sturdier for "the weekend crowd," given our school is a public, community space. We are also considering a sandbox installation, probably in the early spring.

The changes to the playground are improving the dynamic at recess, as are the changes to the "human dynamic:" different grade pairings (the K/5th pairing seems to be extremely successful), the use of cafeteria staff at the beginning of recess, and Lauren Garneau's "friendship groups" that are teaching students how to resolve their own issues.

CO-PRESIDENTS' REPORT

Bridget Stump began by saying how pleased she is with the response to the Direct Appeal this year, and feels that the information we have provided to parents about where the funds go has helped – that, and the envelopes included with one of the backpack mailings. To date, we are slightly ahead on revenue, at 43% of budget, but participation is key, and we have only had 33% of families contribute so far. We plan to do one more general backpack mailing towards the end of October, then follow up to families who have not yet participated with a more targeted communication in November. Ideally, and clearly for tax reasons, we want to achieve the majority of the fund-raising by December.

Bridget was very pleased that the majority of the families agreed to include their information in our first annual school directory – only 7 families opted out and will not be included (other than name.) The directory should be available by conferences (10/20-22). Laura Steenburgh is helping Deb Whitney with e-downloads and formatting. The information distributed at Curriculum Night reflected the information that will be in the directory; if parents would like additional contact information such as cell phone numbers shared, it can only be done at a class level and through the Room Parents.

Every month, either Bridget or Kate Carpini attend the Parent Inter-School Council (PISC). Kate explained that not only does it offer an excellent forum to provide Superintendent Bill McAlduff feedback (he attends every month), but they have guest speakers on a variety of topics related to the schools and their operations.

5TH GRADE COMMITTEE

Kerry Campbell informed the LSPA that the volunteer forms for 5th graders interested in babysitting during conferences have gone out, and the forms for parents requesting babysitting will be going out shortly.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE UPDATE – SARAH GIROTTI

The School Committee is grappling with two related issues: enrollment and renovations plans for Vinson-Owen and the High School. Enrollment continues to grow, and the district is quickly

running out of space. This year alone, for example, the entering K class in total was 142% of the size of last year's K class. Given the recent expansion of McCall Middle School, that building can manage the increasing enrollment, but the elementary schools and the high school cannot adequately house the student population expected within 3 years.

One solution is the expansion of the Vinson-Owen school and the redistricting that would occur upon its completion in 2013. The State will pay for 40% of this expansion. The Town's portion is therefore \$18+ million, and a debt exclusion override will be held on January 11. If the override fails, the options identified are not ideal: re-open Parkhurst or another school with significant work and duplicate staff overhead, or increase class sizes.

For the high school, the State has invited the Town to begin the feasibility phase – Town Meeting members will vote next month to approve the funding for the feasibility study. This project is significant in that that the town will be the only one with which the state is willing to work on 2 projects simultaneously. Once the feasibility study is complete, we will need to consider a second override to implement the recommendations.

The meeting concluded at 10:00am.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Shepard.